

SENATE BILL 1477
By Crutchfield

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 11, Chapter 4,
relative to the use of state parks and other state-owned
land.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 11, Chapter 4, is amended by adding
Sections 2 through 4 as a new part.

SECTION 2. The general assembly finds that the small amount of public lands, often
adjacent to state parks, that are designated as state forests are far more valuable to the citizens
of Tennessee for their recreational and biological benefits, and their contributions to tourism,
than for the generation of revenue through timber production.

The general assembly finds that forest land that comprises Tennessee's publicly-owned
state forests should be managed to ensure that the citizens of Tennessee are provided with the
recreational, economic and ecological benefits associated with mature forest lands that exhibit
minimum harvest impacts.

SECTION 3. In keeping with the benefits designated in Section 2, the land management
emphasis on Tennessee state forests shall be placed on the maintenance of natural areas that
will complement Tennessee state parks, provide a wide range of recreational opportunities,
enhance the economic benefits of tourism, and provide ecological stability to the heavily-
harvested private forest lands of the state. Provided, however, this act is in no way intended to
interfere with the wise use of or the silvicultural practices applied to any private forest land.

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Silvicultural practices that result in the destruction of aesthetic beauty or the disruption of the native forest ecosystem shall be minimized, and shall only be used when necessary to achieve wildlife management objectives or control specific forest disease infestations. In no case shall the amount of annual harvest for any state forest exceed one-tenth of one percent (.1%) of total acreage for even-aged silvicultural practices, and two-tenths of one percent (.2%) of total acreage for uneven-aged silvicultural practices. The public shall be allowed to review and have adequate time to submit written comments on all harvest plans.

SECTION 4. To facilitate the management objectives, the governor shall convene representatives from the department of tourism, the division of forestry and the department of environment and conservation to develop and present a written plan to the senate environment, conservation and tourism committee, as well as the house conservation and environment committee, no later than February 1, 1999. The plan shall include an inventory of state forest resources, such as unique or attractive ecological and historical sites, as well as the kinds of recreational opportunities that each state forest offers. The plan will also include a budget and financial structure to fund the operation of the state forests.

Upon receipt of the plan, the senate environment, conservation and tourism committee and the house conservation and environment committee shall make the document available to interested members of the public and promptly schedule hearings to take comments from the public. When the plan is being developed, the division of forestry shall manage the state forests in a manner consistent with the intent of this act. Upon conclusion of the hearings, the committee shall prepare and submit its report and recommendations to the general assembly.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.